

Steven M. Donellan
KC5ELH (Technician)
Auburn, GA

Before I voice my support for the FCC proposal to drop the Morse code, let me start off by saying this.

It saddens me to hear of such hatred and horrible accusations being made toward Technician class operators during the reply/comments period of the FCC proposal. Many comments have been made that indicate Technician class operators are as bad as CB'ers and therefore a code requirement is there to weed out the less desirables. I thought we were all in this together, or are we talking about two different hobbies? I wish someone would clarify this because to me it sounds like VHF/UHF operators are a different class of folks than HF operators. As far as CB behavior, I have heard way more of my fair share of things on the 75/80 meter band than I have ever heard above 50 MHz. Sometimes it's so bad; I have to change frequencies because my wife and young child are in the room. Now explain that... Whoever thinks that learning Morse Code is going to prevent this type of behavior or develop a better operating courtesy, think again because it doesn't seem to prevent what is already out there today. While listening to a QSO on 20 meters the other day, I heard two guys get into a very heated argument over the use of the frequency which included the exchange of profanity and threats. How often does this occur on 2 meters?

I fully support the FCC's efforts to eliminate Morse code from all amateur classes. This has been a stumbling block for most amateurs who want to move up in the hobby, but are unable to master the code requirement. Let's not forget that this is only one mode of operation among many others (phone, digital, ect.) that do not seem to have a testing requirement. I don't believe it is fair to single out a specific mode when other modes are not focused on in testing requirements.

Secondly, I believe that it is in the best interest of the amateur radio community to have a younger generation of folks obtain such privileges as the elder hams so we can maintain the existence of this hobby. Folks, lets all step back and look at the big picture. Unless we boost an interest in the hobby by making things more attractive to new comers, we run the risk of loosing our band allocations to commercial purposes because of lack of activity. We all know this is a risk and sooner than later if "new life" does not continue to flow in, we will be faced with such a tragic scenario.

Thirdly, I believe that it is crucial during this time of natural disasters and terror threats, ect that all amateurs are able to function in a capacity that would allow them to serve their community and country by providing necessary communications. I for one would have loved to help in the wake of Katrina which affected my home state of Louisiana; however I did not have the HF privileges to assist. I have attempted to pass the code and have been unsuccessful. After being a ham for 12 years, I would love to move on to bigger and better things.

In closing I would also like to point out that more than 30 countries have already dropped the code requirement entirely. The trend is to move forward with society on this issue and not become stagnant because a few old timers want to hold on to something that is not even being used by governmental agencies and military anymore. If the USA is to remain on the cutting edge, we must allow the FCC to move forward with the proposal of dropping the code requirement entirely. I urge the FCC to move on this quickly....

Thanks,

Steven Donellan
KC5ELH